Sale of hotel building by Ashoka Beach Resort

3020. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the total extent of land and hotel building owned by the former Ashoka Beach Resort under ITDC in Kerala, sold to Gulfar Group and the reasons for such transfer.

(B) whether the land under Halcyon Castle included in the above sale and if so, whether any records exist to establish the ownership of Castle to ITDC; and

(c) whether Government propose to conduct any inquiry on the illegal transfer of Kovalam Palace at par with that of Centaur Hotel and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The total extent of land and hotel building owned by the former Ashoka Beach Resort under ITDC in Kerala was 64.5 acres (25.78.40 hectares). The said property was disinvested under the policy of disinvestment of the Government of India and sold to M/s. M.Far Hotels Ltd.

(b) Halcyon Castle was the part of Kovalam Ashoka Beach Resort for the purpose of disinvestment. There are documents which clearly establish the ownership of the entire 64.5 acres of land including Halcyon Castle to ITDC.

(c) The matter is presently *sub-judice* in the court.

Irrigation projects

t3021. SHRI JENESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even after 58 years of Independence, our country is dependent on rains for 57 per cent of its agriculture;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.